

DEATH RATTLE

NUMBER 13 • MATURE READERS

\$2 (\$2.80 CANADA)



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RATTLE

JAXON • POE • BURGER • MUELLER • HARTWIG • GARCIA

Time now for *Death Rattle* #13, a little bit late for Halloween maybe, but just in time for Thanksgiving. Isn't that appropriate? What do we at *Death Rattle* have to be thankful for, anyway? Well, smart remarks aside, we're grateful for:

Robert Burger's superb cover, "Semi-Civilized Man," and for his new, spiffy logo, which you may be seeing more of in the future. Burger is a justly-famed airbrush artist whose work has appeared on paperback novel covers, on movie screens, and in galleries. We welcome him to the feast.

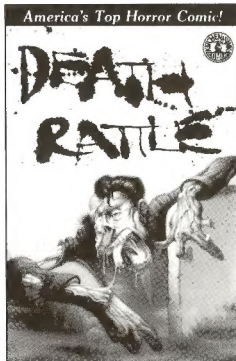
Then there's **Jaxon**, who gets this turkey rolling with another installment of "Bulto," everyone's favorite slimy deity. The silver god's presence is made tangible here—as is the Apaches'.

The next course is "Rainmaker," an eerie tale written by **John Holland** and illustrated by **Dave Garcia** and **Sam Kieth**. All three of them have graced these pages before, although not as a team, and we'll think you'll agree that their bizarre tale of rain and slavery is a rich dish.

Daryl Hutchinson makes his debut here with an illustrated version of **Edgar Allan Poe's** "Masque of the Red Death." A generous helping of Poe, abetted by an artist as talented as Hutchinson, is always satisfying—but maybe not so mild.

Finally, for dessert, that pair of Madison madcaps, **P.S. Mueller** and **Bill Hartwig**, combine once again in our pages with "The Voices in My Head." It's a hardy confection, heavy with nuts and oozing irony. Still, one helping may not be enough.

Watch for *Death Rattle* -14 in January!



Next issue: Is coming out in mid- to late-January, when there are absolutely **no** holidays, so I won't have to force stupid food metaphors in here, and you won't have to read them. Not that you read them in the first place. What we **do** have is a cover by **Dean Armstrong**, whose work was last seen on the cover of *Death Rattle* 7; **Jaxon** with a 14-page "Bulto" segment; the return of **Rand Holmes** and **Mike Baron** with "Bummer," a tale of a Satanic rock concert (aren't they all?); and the return of **Basil Wolverton** with a 1940s science fiction epic, "Spacehawk." It'll warm your heart!

Staff

Editor/Publisher.....**Denis Kitchen**
 Story Editor.....**Dave Schreiner**
 Production.....**Jan Manweiler**
 Circulation.....**Paula Meyer**

Send some letters!

Bulto...

PRESIDIO SAN SABA

OUR CONFERENCES WITH THE NEW COMMANDER, PARRILLA, SHOWED THAT HE ALREADY KNEW MUCH ABOUT THE VEIN AT ALMAGRES.

... GUARDED BY
A CURSE OF SOME
SORT, ISN'T IT ??
HA HA HA

IT'S NO LAUGHING
MATTER, EXCELLENCY.
LUCIFER INHABITS
THE PLACE !!!



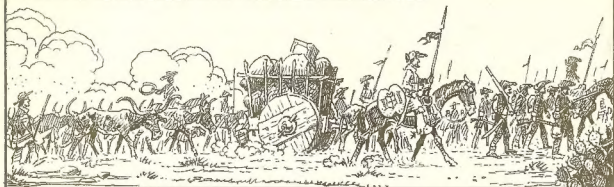
WE TOLD HIM ABOUT OLD COCHATA, ABOUT HIS BULTO NEGRO, AND THEN WE TOLD HIM ABOUT THE NEW CAVE AT SAN SABA.

MUCH
RICHER,
YOU SAY ?

YES CAPITÁN,
AND IT HAS NO
EVIL TAINT.



SO WHEN THE FOUNDING EXPEDITION MARCHED NORTHWARD,
IT WAS TO SAN SABA WE HEADED, NOT TO LOS ALMAGRES.



IMAGINE FATHER TERREROS' DISMAY WHEN NOTHING BUT STONY SILENCE
GREETED OUR ARRIVAL IN THE CANYON FAR FROM CIVILIZATION'S REACH.



AGAINST HIS BETTER JUDGEMENT, CAPTAIN
BARRILLA SET ABOUT ERECTING A PRESIDIO.



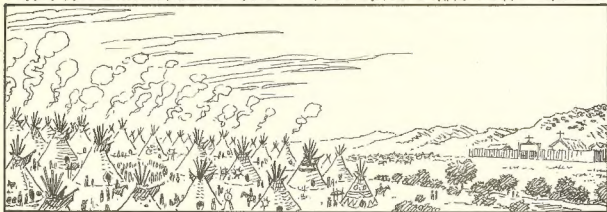
THE PRIEST, HOPING TO AVOID DIFFICULTIES BE-
TWEEN SOLDIERS AND FEMALE CONVERTS, WISELY
BUILT HIS MISSION THREE MILES DOWNSTREAM.



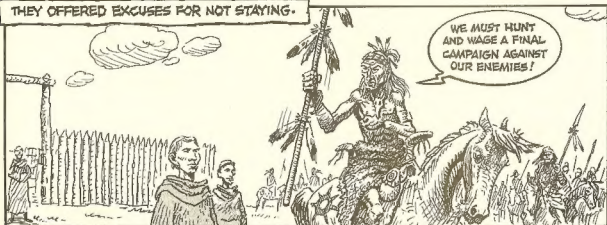
MONTHS PASSED AND STILL NO INDIANS APPEARED. TERREROS WAS ON THE VERGE OF DESPAIR.



FINALLY COYOTE TWO FEET BROUGHT 3000 OF HIS PEOPLE AND CAMPED NEAR THE MISSION.



THEY OFFERED EXCUSES FOR NOT STAYING.



WITH HEAVY HEARTS FATHER TERREROS AND HIS WORKERS WATCHED THEM GO.



UNBEKNOWNST TO US AT SAN SABA, THAT SUMMER THE APACHES FELL ON THEIR NORTENO FOES—THE COMANCHES AND ALLIED TRIBES—WITH A VENGEANCE!



VILLAGE AFTER VILLAGE THEY RAZED, LEAVING BEHIND SPANISH MOMENTOS.



OCCASIONALLY THEY SPARED A FEW CAPTIVES...



... AND ALLOWED THEM A "MIRACULOUS" ESCAPE.



THUS, WORD OF OUR ALLIANCE WITH THEIR HATED ENEMIES SOON REACHED NORTENO CAMPS.



COYOTE TWO FEET REVELLED IN THE DECEPTION AND KEPT THE GREAT ONE INFORMED.



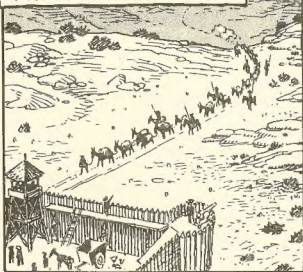
UNWARE OF THIS TREACHERY, CAPT. PARRILLA DIRECTED US TO BEGIN MINING OPERATIONS.



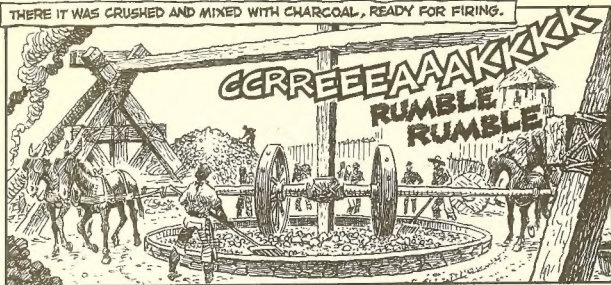
SOME OF THE RECRUITS WERE EXPERIENCED PICKMEN, MOSTLY MESTIZO OR MULATTO, WHO HAD WORKED SILVER MINES IN THE INTERIOR.



THE EXTRACTED ORE WAS BROUGHT TO PRESIDIO SAN SABA ON MULES.



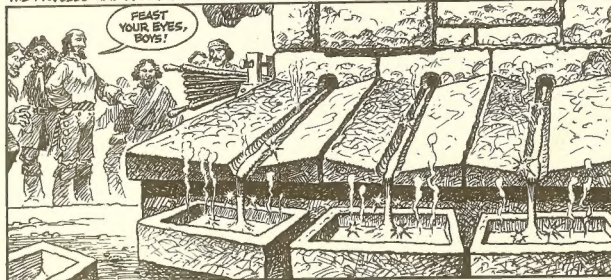
THERE IT WAS CRUSHED AND MIXED WITH CHARCOAL, READY FOR FIRING.



A CRUDE SMELTER WAS CONSTRUCTED UNDER GUZMAN'S DIRECTION.



HIS PROCESS WAS EFFECTIVE BECAUSE THE ORE WAS SO RICH — AND CHARCOAL SO PLENTIFUL.



DESPITE OUR EARLY SUCCESS PARRILLA KNEW THE LOCATION WAS INDEFENSIBLE.



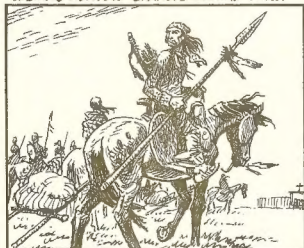
HE TOOK FATHER TERREROS TO ALMAGRES, HOPING TO TALK SOME SENSE INTO HIM.



THE PRIEST, THO HIS FAITH IN THE APACHES WAS FADING, REFUSED TO MOVE THE MISSION.



AS WINTER CAME ON, TERREROS' INDIANS RE-APPEARED, LOADED WITH BUFFALO MEAT AND CASTING NERVOUS GLANCES BEHIND THEM.



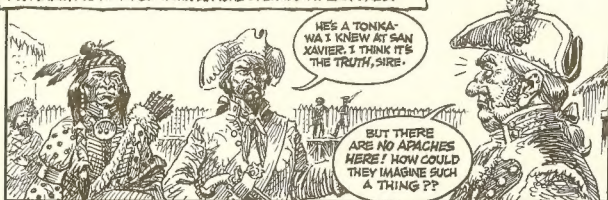
AS USUAL COYOTE TWO FEET MADE MANY PROMISES...



... BUT THEY SOON RODE SOUTH, LEAVING THE PRIESTS MORE DESTITUTE THAN BEFORE.



RUMORS FILTERED IN THAT THE NORTEÑOS WERE MASSING FOR AN ATTACK TO KILL ALL THEIR APACHE ENEMIES AT SAN SABA.



WHEN NOTHING HAPPENED WE RELAXED. LIFE SETTLED INTO A DULL ROUTINE—HERDING, HUNTING, AND WORK AT THE SMELTER.



OUR MONOTONY WAS BROKEN ONLY BY THE OCCASIONAL ARRIVAL OF SUPPLY TRAINS.



BUT OUR HORSEHERD WAS HIT BY NORTEÑOS AT THE END OF FEBRUARY.



A PURSUING DETAIL FOUND THE HILLS CRAWLING WITH INDIANS AND BARELY ESCAPED THEIR WRATH.

FARRILLA TRIED WITHOUT SUCCESS TO GET THE MISSIONARIES TO COME TO THE FORT.



AT DAWN THE ATTACK CAME, JUST AS WE KNEW IT WOULD.



MORE THAN 2000 PAINTED WARRIORS DESCENDED ON THE MISSION, LOOTING IT, SETTING IT AFIRE, AND KILLING ITS INHABITANTS — INCLUDING FATHER TERREROS!



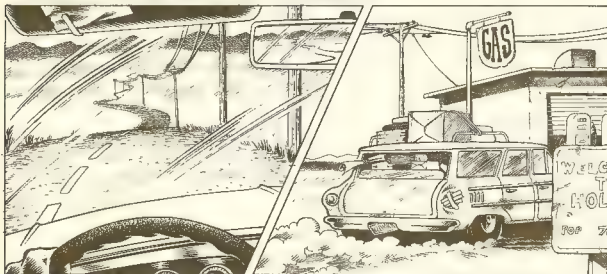
ALL WE COULD DO WITH A PALTRY 100 MEN WAS HIDE IN OUR LITTLE STOCKADE AND WATCH...

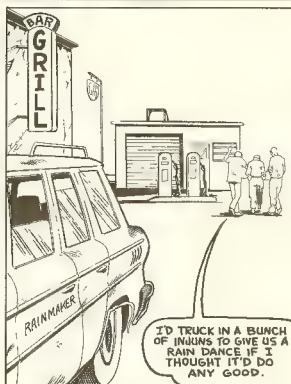
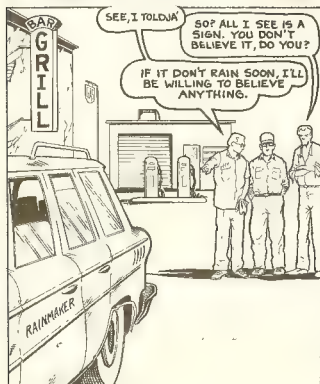
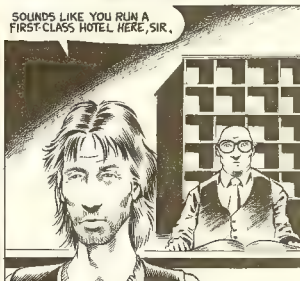
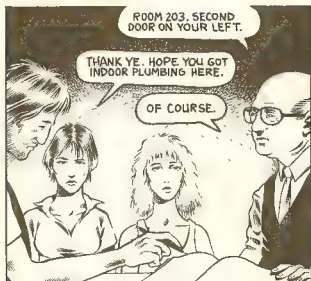
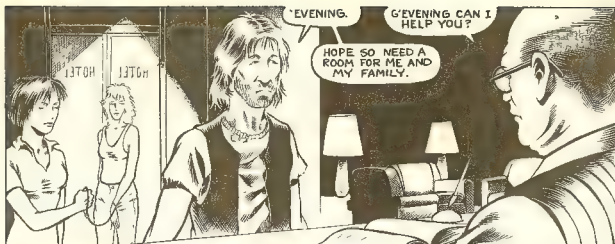


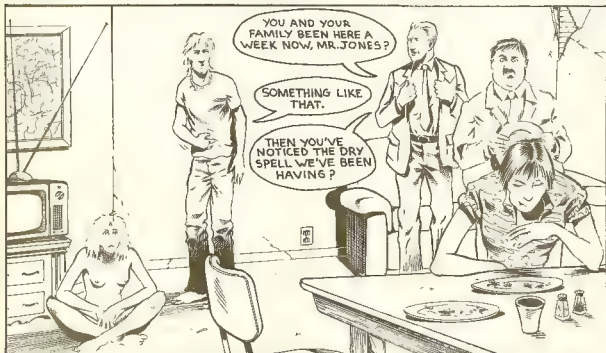
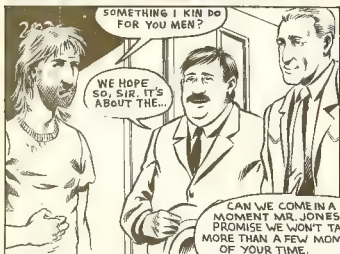
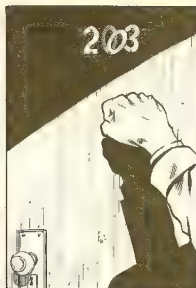
...WATCH AS THE NORTEÑOS PARADED PAST US, BEARING GRISLY TROPHIES BACK INTO THEIR UNCHARTED DOMAIN!!



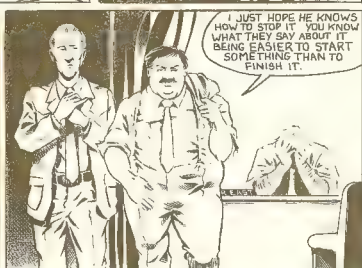
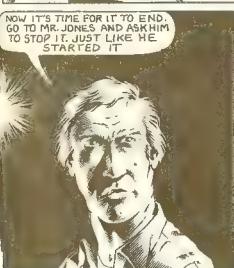
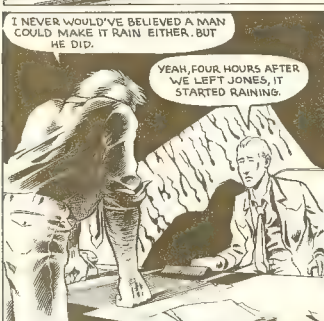
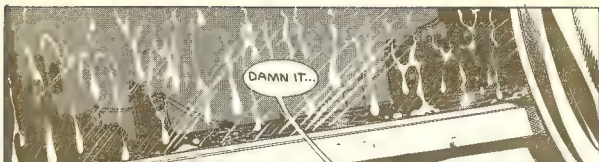
RAINMAKER













WE'D LIKE TO THANK YOU, MR. JONES. YOU DID AS PROMISED.

THE CITY OWES YOU A GREAT DEBT.

WELL, THE CITY IS WELCOME



WE ONLY HAVE ONE PROBLEM.

NOT THAT WE WANT TO SOUND UNGRATEFUL, BUT COULD YOU MAKE IT STOP NOW?



THE RAIN, THAT IS.

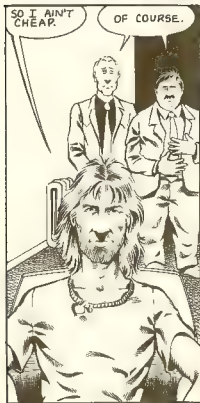


WELL, SIR, I DON'T STOP RAINS GENERALLY. AND I HATE TO SAY THIS, BUT I DON'T STOP 'EM FREE.

UH HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?



WELL, ANY DANG FOOL CAN START A RAIN, BUT IT TAKES A CRAFTSMAN TO STOP IT.



SO I AIN'T CHEAP.

OF COURSE.



A BABY. NOT MORE THAN THREE MONTHS OLD. BOY OR GIRL, IT DON'T MATTER NONE.



YOU'RE CRAZY!

WE COULD NEVER! IT'S INSANE!



Comics Buyer's Guide Fan Awards for 1987

1. Favorite Editor
2. Favorite Writer
3. Favorite Penciller
4. Favorite Inker
5. Favorite Colorist
6. Favorite Letterer
7. Favorite Cover Artist
8. Favorite Comic-Book Story
9. Favorite Comic Book
10. Favorite Limited Comic-Book Series
11. Favorite Original Graphic Novel
12. Favorite Reprint Graphic Novel
13. Favorite Character
14. Favorite Publication about Comics

Phil Seuling Award for Favorite Direct-Sale-Only Title

Only material cover-dated 1987 is eligible for consideration. Votes for ineligible material will not be counted. Anyone may copy and circulate this ballot, and any fan may vote only once and vote for no more than one nominee in each category. Ballot-box stuffing will result in the destruction of all ballots involved. You need not vote in all categories. *Comics Buyer's Guide* is not eligible for Category 13.

A free copy of *Comics Buyer's Guide* #752, dated April 15, 1988 (which will carry the results of voting), will be sent to any U.S. voter who does not already have a current or expired subscription to *CBG*. Votes from other countries will be counted, but we regret that a sample copy cannot be sent unless the vote is accompanied by \$1.50 in U.S. funds to cover costs of handling and shipping to another country.

Mail your ballot individually in a single envelope by February 29, 1988, to:

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Name Male Female (circle one) Age

Street or Box

City, State, and ZIP

Please type or print your votes and information clearly.

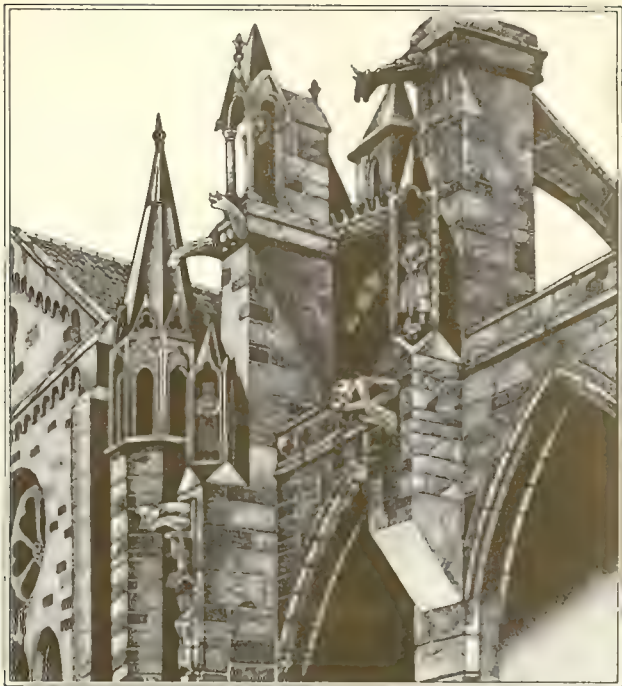
You need not cut or tear out this page in order to vote! Copies are acceptable and will be counted.

Masque of the Red Death

By Edgar Allan Poe



The text in this section is extremely faint and illegible, appearing as a block of lines at the bottom of the page.



But the Prince Prospero was happy and dauntless and sagacious. When his dominions were half depopulated, he summoned to his presence a thousand hale and light-hearted friends from among the knights and dames of his court, and with these retired to the deep seclusion of one of his castellated abbeys. This was an extensive and magnificent structure, the creation of the prince's own eccentric yet august taste. A strong and lofty wall girdled it in. This wall had gates of iron. The courtiers, having entered, brought furnaces and massy hammers and welded the bolts.

They resolved to leave means neither of ingress or egress to the sudden impulses of despair or of frenzy from within. The abbey was amply provisioned. With such precautions the courtiers might bid defiance to contagion. The external world could take care of itself. In the meantime it was folly to grieve, or to think. The prince had provided all the appliances of pleasure. There were buffoons, there were improvisatori, there were ballet-dancers, there were musicians, there was Beauty, there was wine. All these and security were within. Without was the "Red Death."



It was toward the close of the fifth or sixth month of his seclusion, and while the pestilence raged most furiously abroad, that the Prince Prospero entertained his thousand friends at a masked ball of the most unusual magnificence.

It was a voluptuous scene, that masquerade. But first let me tell of the rooms in which it was held. There were seven, an imperial suite. In many palaces, however, such suites form a long and straight vista, while the folding doors slide back nearly to the walls on either hand, so that the view of the whole extent is scarcely impeded. Here the case was very different; as might have been expected from the duke's love of the *bizarre*. The apartments were so irregularly disposed

that the vision embraced but little more than one at a time. There was a sharp turn at every twenty or thirty yards, and at each turn a novel effect. To the right and left, in the middle of each wall, a tall and narrow Gothic window looked out upon a closed corridor which pursued the windings of the suite. These windows were of stained glass whose color varied in accordance with the prevailing hue of the decorations of the chamber into which it opened. That at the eastern extremity was hung, for example, in blue—and vividly blue were its windows. The second chamber was purple in its ornaments and tapestries, and here the panes were purple.



The third was green throughout, and so were the casements. The fourth was furnished and lighted with orange—the fifth with white—the sixth with violet. The seventh apartment was closely shrouded in black velvet tapestries that hung all over the ceiling and down the walls, falling in heavy folds upon a carpet of the same material and hue. But in this chamber only, the color of the windows failed to correspond with the decorations. The panes here were scarlet—a deep blood color. Now in no one of the seven apartments was there any lamp or candelabrum, amid the profusion of golden ornaments that lay scattered to and fro or depended from the roof. There was no light of any

kind emanating from lamp or candle within the suite of chambers. But in the corridors that followed the suite, there stood, opposite to each window, a heavy tripod, bearing a brazier of fire that projected its rays through the tinted glass and so glaringly illumined the room. And thus were produced a multitude of gaudy and fantastic appearances. But in the western or black chamber the effect of the fire-light that streamed upon the dark hangings through the blood-tinted panes, was ghastly in the extreme, and produced so wild a look upon the countenances of those who entered, that there were few of the company bold enough to set foot within its precincts at all.



It was in this apartment, also, that there stood against the western wall, a gigantic clock of ebony. Its pendulum swung to and fro with a dull, heavy, monotonous clang; and when the minute-hand made the circuit of the face, and the hour was to be stricken, there came from the brazen lungs of the clock a sound which was clear and loud and deep and exceedingly musical, but of so peculiar a note and emphasis that, at each lapse of an hour, the musicians of the orchestra were constrained to pause, momentarily, in their performance, to hearken to the sound; and thus the waltzers perforce ceased their evolutions; and there was a brief disconcert of the whole gay company; and, while the

chimes of the clock yet rang, it was observed that the giddiest grew pale, and the more aged and sedate passed their hands over their brows as if in confused reverie or meditation.

But, in spite of these things, it was gay and magnificent revel. The tastes of the duke were peculiar. He had a fine eye for colors and effects. He disregarded the *decora* of mere fashion. His plans were bold and fiery, and his conceptions glowed with barbaric lustre. There are some who would have thought him mad. His followers felt that he was not. It was necessary to hear and see and touch him to be *sure* that he was not.

There were delirious fancies
such as the madman fashions



There were delirious fancies such as the madman fashions. There was much of the beautiful, much of the wanton, much of the *bizarre*, something of the terrible, and not a little of that which might have excited disgust. To and fro in the seven chambers there stalked, in fact, a multitude of dreams. And these—the dreams—writhed in and about, taking hue from the rooms, and causing the wild music of the orchestra to seem as the echo of their steps. And, anon, there strikes the ebony clock which stands in the hall of the velvet. And then, for a moment, all is still, and all is silent save the voice of the clock. The dreams are stiff-frozen as they stand. And now again the music swells, and the

dreams live, and writhe to and fro more merrily than ever, taking hue from the many-tinted windows through which stream the rays from the tripods. But to the chamber which lies most westwardly of the seven, there are now none of the maskers who venture; for the night is waning away; and there flows a ruddier light through the blood-colored panes; and the blackness of the sable drapery appals; and to him whose foot falls upon the sable carpet, there comes from the near clock of ebony a muffled peal more solemnly emphatic than any which reaches *their* ears who indulge in the more remote gaieties of the other apartments.

The figure was tall and gaunt, and shrouded from head to foot in the habiliments of the grave



But now there were twelve strokes to be sounded by the bell of the clock; and thus it happened, perhaps, that more of thought crept, with more of time, into the meditations of the thoughtful among those who revelled. And thus, too, it happened, perhaps, that before the last echoes of the last chime had utterly sunk into silence, there were many individuals in the crowd who had found leisure to become aware of the presence of a masked figure which had arrested the attention of no single individual before. And the rumor of this new presence having spread itself whisperingly around, there arose at length from the whole company a buzz, or murmur, expressive of disappro-

bation and surprise—then, finally, of terror, of horror, and of disgust.

The figure was tall and gaunt, and shrouded from head to foot in the habiliments of the grave. The mask which concealed the visage was made so nearly to resemble the countenance of a stiffened corpse that the closest scrutiny must have had difficulty in detecting the cheat. And yet all this might have been endured, if not approved, by the mad revellers around. But the murmur had gone so far as to assume the type of the Red Death. His vesture was dabbled in blood—and his broad brow, with all the features of the face, was besprinkled with the scarlet horror.



When the eyes of Prince Prospero fell upon this spectral image (which with a slow and solemn movement, as if more fully to sustain its role, stalked to and fro among the waltzers) he was seen to be convulsed, in the first moment with a strong shudder either of terror or distaste; but, in the next, his brow reddened with rage.

"Who dares?" he demanded hoarsely of the courtiers who stood near him—"who dares insult us with this blasphemous mockery? Seize him and unmask him—that we may know whom we have to hang at sunrise, from the battlements!"

But from a certain nameless awe with which the mad assumptions of the mummer had inspired the

whole party, there were found none who put forth hand to seize him; so that, unimpeded, he passed within a yard of the prince's person; and, while the vast assembly, as if with one impulse, shrank from the centres of the rooms to the walls, he made his way uninterruptedly, but with the same solemn and measured step which had distinguished him from the first, through the blue chamber to the purple—through the purple to the green—through the green to the orange—through this again to the white—and even thence to the violet, ere a decided movement had been made to arrest him. It was then, however, that the Prince Prospero, maddening with rage and the shame of his own momentary cowardice, rushed hurriedly

**And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death
held illimitable dominion over all**



through the six chambers, while none followed him on account of a deadly terror that had seized upon all. He bore aloft a drawn dagger, and had approached, in rapid impetuosity, to within three or four feet of the retreating figure, when the latter, having attained the extremity of the velvet apartment, turned suddenly and confronted his pursuer. There was a sharp cry—and the dagger dropped gleaming upon the sable carpet, upon which, instantly afterwards, fell prostrate in death the Prince Prospero. Then, summoning the wild courage of despair, a throng of the revellers at once threw themselves into the black apartment, and, seizing the mummer, whose tall figure stood erect and motionless within the shadow of the ebony clock,

gasped in unutterable horror at finding the grave-cerements and corpse-like mask which they handled with so violent a rudeness, untenanted by any tangible form.

And now was acknowledged the presence of the Red Death. He had come like a thief in the night. And one by one dropped the revellers in the blood-bedewed halls of their revel, and died each in the despairing posture of his fall. And the life of the ebony clock went out with that of the last of the gay. And the flames of the tripods expired. And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all.

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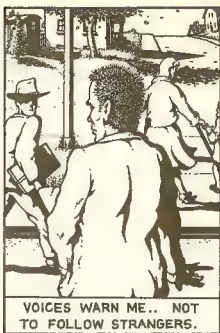
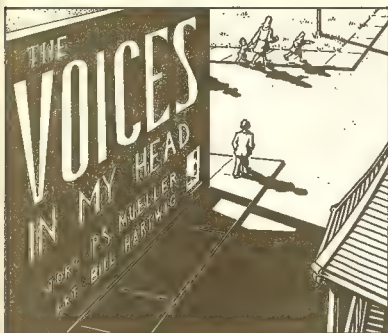
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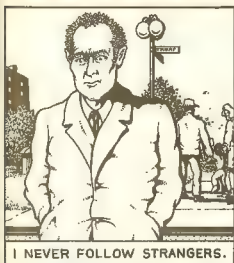
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VOICES WARN ME.. NOT
TO FOLLOW STRANGERS.



I NEVER FOLLOW STRANGERS.



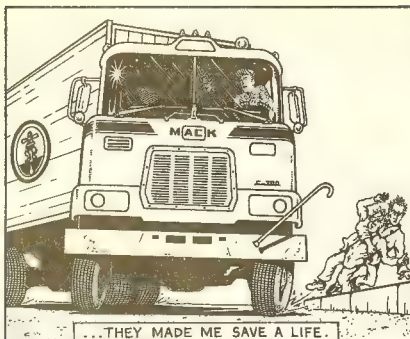
VOICES TELL ME GOD KNOWS WHAT I'M
THINKING ALL OF THE TIME...



... I PRAY A LOT.



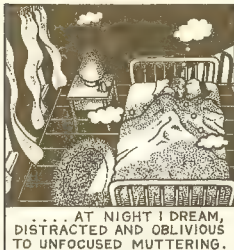
THE OTHER DAY VOICES COMPELLED ME.



...THEY MADE ME SAVE A LIFE.



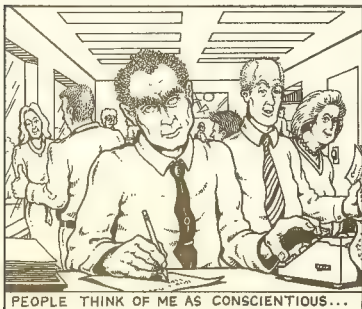
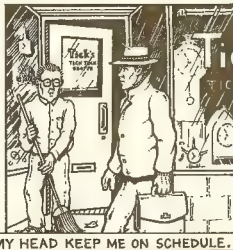
ALL DAY I LISTEN TO THESE VOICES AND OBEY.



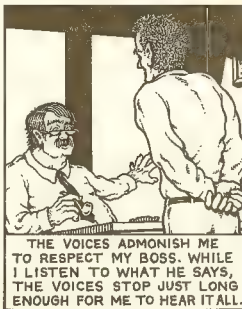
.... AT NIGHT I DREAM, DISTRACTED AND OBLIVIOUS TO UNFOCUSED MUTTERING.



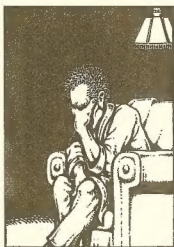
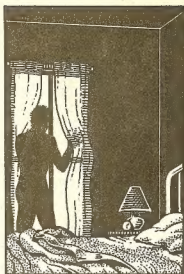
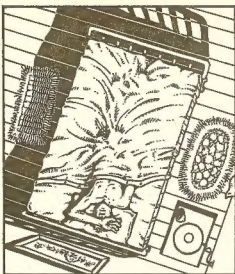
THE VOICES IN MY HEAD KEEP ME ON SCHEDULE.



PEOPLE THINK OF ME AS CONSCIENTIOUS...



THE VOICES ADMONISH ME TO RESPECT MY BOSS. WHILE I LISTEN TO WHAT HE SAYS, THE VOICES STOP JUST LONG ENOUGH FOR ME TO HEAR IT ALL.



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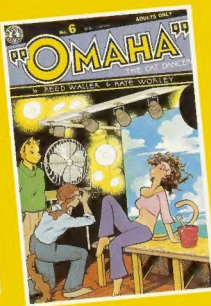
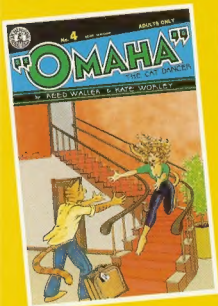
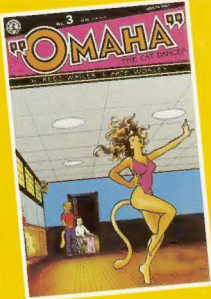
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History of "Ev'ry Little Bug"

The song first saw the light of day in *The Spirit* section of June 9, 1946, in the story "Pool's Toadstool Facial Cream," or "Love Comes To The Spirit." It was written by Will Eisner for Gam, a piano player, to noodle while the action spun around him. The song became a running gag in following sections, being sung by, among others, Parelli (with Italian accent), Murmansk Manny (Russian) and Robert Merrill (light opera). It was finally adopted by Ebony as his theme of unrequited love. In "Ev'ry Little Bug," of April 7, 1947, the song was finally set to music, by Bill Harr, and the sheet music was printed at the end of the story. No one has ever recorded the song that was on everyone's lips in Central City in 1946 and 1947—until now!



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